



## Community Ambassador Job Description

Raising A Reader MA is adding two community ambassador seats to our board. Partners, parents and/or caregivers are at the core of our mission and their guidance is important to support sound and strategic decision-making and provide valuable perspectives. Community leadership is fostered on a meaningful level when community members hold leadership roles to help shape the future of their families, programs and communities by being actively engaged and informed. Serving on a non-profit board is an opportunity to work with practitioners and build effective partnerships based upon mutual respect and shared responsibility. Community ambassadors will be active participants at board meetings and will be asked to share their expertise and contribute to organizational decision making.

The board has a stated goal to recruit members from diverse backgrounds and perspectives, in order to promote understanding of the cultures and experiences represented by RAR-MA constituents, and to attract strong and talented members. The board recognizes the value of diversity and seeks to foster that value by adding community ambassadors to the board, among other measures.

**Mission:** RAR-MA is an evidence-based early literacy and family engagement organization with a mission to close the literacy opportunity gap among children 0-6 in high-need communities by helping families develop and practice shared home reading habits.

### **Responsibilities:**

The community ambassadors shall have the following responsibilities:

- Provide perspective to inform RAR-MA's practice and our Theory of Change.
- Act as liaisons between their communities and the board of directors (and other interested stakeholders including donors, community leaders, volunteers, program partners and parents).
- Identify challenges and opportunities, address our practices pertinent to supporting families and children's reading routines and school readiness, and make appropriate recommendations.
- Interact with community stakeholders and experts when necessary and appropriate to inform organizational decisions.
- Promote and facilitate collaboration among organizations and initiatives as necessary and appropriate.
- Attend all board meetings at a pre-determined location, typically Boston, or call in as needed.
- Review and participate in the onboarding process before the first official meeting.

Being a board member of Raising A Reader MA is a position of trust. The board is our highest tier of governance and our ultimate decision-making authority. Two community ambassador seats will be added to the board and staggered to allow one community ambassador to train the incoming community ambassador. The community ambassadors will be invited to board meetings and be expected to attend, but without a fiduciary responsibility or voting rights, and will be excused from Executive Sessions.

### **Diversity:**

The community ambassadors shall be drawn from diverse racial, ethnic, religious, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic backgrounds, and geographic locations from the serving communities and shall have direct experience and understanding of our Raising A Reader MA model.

### **Term/Renewal:**

A community ambassador shall serve a term of 12 to 18 months and/or until their successor is appointed. The position may be renewed for a second term. Every effort will be made to ensure there are no significant vacancies in the community ambassador role and the board will maintain a list of prospective candidates to onboard in a timely manner. The goal is to stagger the terms to allow one outgoing community ambassador to mentor an incoming community ambassador.

**Vacancy:**

Understanding that circumstances to serve might change, any community ambassador may resign or end their term by delivering a written resignation to the chair of the board of directors. The Board requests that community ambassadors provide at least one month's notice where possible.

**Expectations:**

Board members and community ambassadors are expected to attend all board meetings and will be invited to all major fundraising events. The community ambassadors are encouraged to attend board meetings in person, but have the option to call in remotely.

**Compensation:**

A stipend will be offered to cover any reasonable travel costs and child care expenses (approved in advance) incurred by attending meetings, however, serving on the board is a volunteer position and there is no compensation for service.

**Candidates, Nomination and Application:**

Community ambassador seats are filled by constituents who live and/or work in the communities RAR-MA serves. Eligible candidates will have a direct familiarity with Raising A Reader MA in order to be able to add this valuable first-hand perspective. A community ambassador seat can be filled by an individual from the communities we serve, who has an interest in our mission, and wants to participate on a board as a way to give back to his/her community and gain valuable board leadership experience. The program team and our program partners will be asked to recommend parent, partner and community representatives for consideration, and individuals may self-nominate to be considered by the board. Candidates are selected through an application process and will be interviewed by a member of the staff or board and be asked to review this community ambassador job description prior to committing. Ideal candidates are selected by the board based on the following criteria: commitment to community involvement and leadership and professional and personal achievement with a focus in supporting values aligned with RAR-MA. Candidates must be 18 years or older.

**On-boarding process:**

The staggered timeline will allow community ambassadors to learn from each other while participating in board meetings and activities. All "on-boarding" board documents will be shared with community ambassadors in advance of first board meeting.

**Mentoring:**

The community ambassadors will be assigned a mentor (staff or board member) to help steward their participation and ensure focus on the following after a few months of service:

- 1) How is your board experience going? Any suggestions, comments, questions, or complaints?
- 2) Do you feel that you are learning enough about RAR-MA to make good organizational decisions?
- 3) Are there specific areas in which you would like training?
- 4) What strengths, skills, and knowledge do you hope to contribute in your community ambassador role on the Board?
- 5) What goals would you like to accomplish through your community ambassador board service this year and in the long run?
- 6) Are you planning on continuing as a community ambassador? If you have considered taking a leadership position on a committee, what support would you need to be ready for that?
- 7) Resume support: The board will provide valuable expertise to support the community ambassador, including providing language to add to their resume/CV, that describes the leadership experience with Raising A Reader MA.

**Other Community Ambassador Objectives:**

Assists in raising funds needed to develop and maintain the fiscal health of the agency (sharing their personal impact story with RAR-MA to other constituents).

Always acts in the best interest of the agency and behaves in a manner that conforms with agency policies regarding loyalty, ethical behavior and conflict-of-interest.

Becomes familiar with agency bylaws, policies and rules of Procedure to facilitate appropriate and effective decision-making.

Participates in trainings and periodic assessments of board effectiveness in order to improve productivity and participation.

Stays informed about the organization by reading relevant information and financial reports, prepares themselves well for meetings, and carefully reviews all materials and information circulated in anticipation of board deliberations and decision-making pertinent to their participation.

Make a serious commitment to regularly attend and actively participate in all board meetings and any assigned committee meetings.

Volunteers for and willingly accepts assignments as they are able.

Gets to know other board members and builds a collegial working relationship that contributes to consensus.

Makes every effort to understand the needs of the community and acts as an ambassador in marketing the agency to key stakeholders.